

Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C.

January 10, 2000

Washington Federal Strategies  
c/o Anne E. Linton, Esq.  
4601 North Park Avenue  
Suite 710  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Re: Acceptance of Comments As Timely Filed in (Docket No. 96-45)

The Office of the Secretary has received your request for acceptance of your pleading in the above-referenced proceeding as timely filed due to operational problems with the Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. Section 0.231(I), the Secretary has reviewed your request and verified your assertions. After considering arguments, the Secretary has determined that this pleading will be accepted as timely filed. If we can be of further assistance, please contact our office.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

*for William F. Cator*  
Magalie Roman Salas  
Secretary

Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, DC 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of

Federal-State Joint Board on  
Universal Service

Forward-Looking Cost Mechanism  
For High Cost Support for  
Non-Rural LECs

CC Docket No. 96-45

CC Docket No. 97-160

**RESPONSE OF BELL ATLANTIC<sup>1</sup>  
TO DATA REQUEST**

As required by the Commission's rules (47 C.F.R. § 36.611) and by its Ninth Report and Order<sup>2</sup> and Nineteenth Order on Reconsideration<sup>3</sup>, Bell Atlantic is submitting data on line counts for each wire center in the Bell Atlantic service area.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bell Atlantic telephone companies ("Bell Atlantic") are Bell Atlantic-Delaware, Inc.; Bell Atlantic-Maryland, Inc.; Bell Atlantic-New Jersey, Inc.; Bell Atlantic-Pennsylvania, Inc.; Bell Atlantic-Virginia, Inc.; Bell Atlantic-Washington, DC, Inc.; Bell Atlantic-West Virginia, Inc.; New York Telephone Company and New England Telephone and Telegraph Company.

<sup>2</sup> See Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket No. 96-45, Ninth Report and Order and Eighteenth Order On Reconsideration, FCC 99-306, ¶ 92, n.248 (rel. Nov. 2, 1999) ("Ninth Report and Order").

<sup>3</sup> See Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket No. 96-45, Nineteenth Order on Reconsideration, FCC 99-396, ¶ 9 (rel. Dec. 17, 1999), ("Nineteenth Order on Reconsideration").

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As the Commission recognized in its previous orders requiring the submission of line count data,<sup>4</sup> these data are confidential information that are routinely withheld from public inspection pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552(b)) and the Commission's Rules (47 C.F.R. § 0.457). Accordingly, Bell Atlantic requests confidential treatment for the data that it has submitted to the National Exchange Carrier Association as the Commission's data collection agent. Attached is a "Designation of Confidential Information" form signed by an officer of Bell Atlantic, certifying that the information cited below is confidential. *See Order*, ¶ 8.

The line count data in this submission consist of trade secrets and commercial or financial information that are protected by law from public disclosure. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4), 47 C.F.R. § 0.457(d). Bell Atlantic is subject to actual or potential competition throughout its service area in the local exchange and exchange access markets. This information would enable a competitor to target its facility construction and service marketing to areas with the highest concentrations of customers, and to identify customer volumes for marketing purposes. For these reasons, the data are highly sensitive and commercially valuable. Bell Atlantic keeps these data confidential and has not made the data publicly available. The Commission has treated similar data submissions in this proceeding in the past as confidential and protected from public disclosure. Clearly, the data are competitively-sensitive and should be withheld from public inspection.

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<sup>4</sup> *See Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-160, Order, DA 99-1406, ¶ 8 (rel. July 19, 1999) ("Order").

The confidential data will be marked as such by NECA and are being provided pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 8 of the Order.

Of Counsel  
Michael E. Glover

Respectfully submitted,

By:   
Joseph DiBella

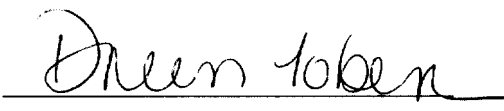
1320 North Court House Road  
Eighth Floor  
Arlington, VA 22201  
(703) 974-6350

Attorney for the Bell Atlantic  
telephone companies

Dated: January 7, 2000

DESIGNATION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

I hereby certify that the information designated as confidential in the attached response(s) to this Data Request is protected by Bell Atlantic as confidential or financial information:

SIGNATURE: 

TITLE: Vice President and Controller of Finance

ADDRESS: 1095 Avenue of Americas, Room 4119  
New York, NY 10036

TELEPHONE: 212-395-1057

FAX: 212-597-2598

## REASONS FOR WITHHOLDING INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC RECORD

Bell Atlantic seeks confidential treatment of the attached line count data. These data consist of trade secrets and commercial or financial information that are protected by law from public disclosure. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4), 47 C.F.R. § 457(d). Bell Atlantic is subject to actual or potential competition throughout its service area in the local exchange and exchange access markets. This information would enable a competitor to target its facility construction and service marketing to areas with the highest concentrations of customers, and to identify customer volumes for marketing purposes. For these reasons, the data are highly sensitive and commercially valuable. Bell Atlantic keeps these data confidential and has not made the data publicly available. The Commission has treated similar data submissions in this proceeding in the past as confidential and protected from public disclosure. Clearly, the data are competitively-sensitive and should be withheld from public inspection.